

QUESTION: 02

ds

1.

INTRODUCTION

21st century will be remembered in the annals of history as the era, where authoritarian regimes had to knee-down. Whether, it was the Arab Spring or the ouster of Hosna Sheikh from Bangladesh. The opposition is winning all around the world. Syria is another manifestation of this. Islamist rebels topple-down the half-a-century rule of Assad family, forcing him to flee the Damascus. The changing geopolitical tensions and middle-East crisis, specifically ~~the~~ since October 2023, are the main reasons behind it. This can change the trajectory of ongoing Iran-Israel conflict along with other implications. The people of Damascus needs to pay the price of freedom through patience and resilience.

2. SYRIA: BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RECENT CONDITION

In early December, 2024 the Islamist rebel group, Hayat-e-Tehreek Sham (HTS), occupied Aleppo city - north of Damascus. After a while, the rebels marched on to Damascus with its leader Juhani announcing the flee of Assad to Moscow, Russia. Currently, Juhani that is backed by Turkey, Al-Qaeda is in charge of Damascus political affairs.

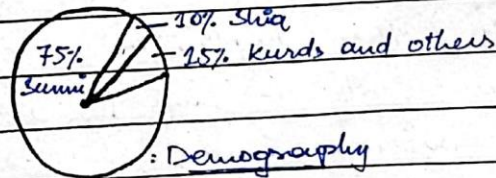
3 REASONS BEHIND THE FALL OF DAMASCUS:

3.1 IRON-HAND RULE:

Al-Assad family has ruled over Damascus for 54 years approx. In this rule, fundamental human rights, freedom, economic stability have remained a distant dream. To put things in perspective, the rebels emptied private jails of Assad and found an 11-year old in it. (-BPC).

3.2 THE CURB OF MAJORITY:

Asad and his family are Shia Muslims that ruled Sunni majority without even their consent. This created distrust for decades between the people and their rulers.



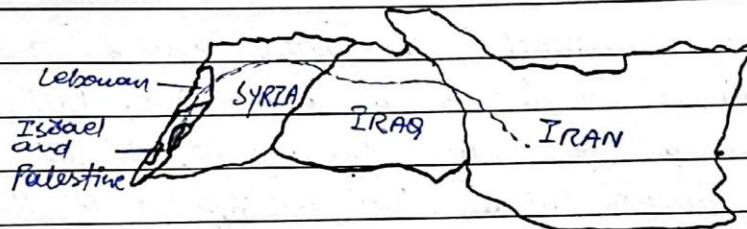
3.3 DECADE LONG UPRISING:

Back in 2013, there were protest going on inside Damascus and Arab springs. A 13-year old boy, Ibrahim, casually wrote 'Now, it's your turn, Doctor!'. The line is high/lighting towards Assad as he is also a doctor. Resultantly, Ibrahim along with his friend - all winners - were taken by Syrian forces. After physical

and mental torture, they were released, but the event created so much chaos that HTS emerged. Since then, HTS was fighting for Syrian liberation backed by Turkey, ISIS and Al-Qaeda.

3.4 ON-GOING ISRAEL WAR:

In contrast of HTS, Assad government is controlled or influenced by Iran. Through Syria, Iran aids its proxy Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza.



Since October 7, 2023, Israel is engaged in proxy wars and so is Iran. Leadership of Hamas, Hezbollah has also been killed. On the other hand Russia is busy in Ukraine as well. Owing to these reasons, it was perfect time for HTS to topple Assad.

3.5 Change of US Regime:

It is also a major reason as Trump has given warning to Tel Aviv to clean-up this mess by January 20, 2024. Like his earlier rule, Trump will go hard on Iran and try to create peace in Middle-East. Hence, clipping Shia god wings in middle-East is the first step.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE FALL OF DAMASCUS:

4.4

4.1 SAFE BORDERS FOR ISRAEL:

Tel Aviv had shown concern over present borders multiple times. As Iran keeps attacking Yemen north as well as Yemen. Now, the Hamas is tattered and Assad MIA, Tel Aviv can envision of greater Israel plans.

4.2 IRAN'S DOMINANCY WILL LOSE:

Middle-East has remained the battle ground of Shia vs. Sunni for a long-time. But, the change of Saudi's leadership, in the form of M. Bin Salman, has contributed to the tilt of region towards Sunni governments. This will again have the dominance of KSA in the region.

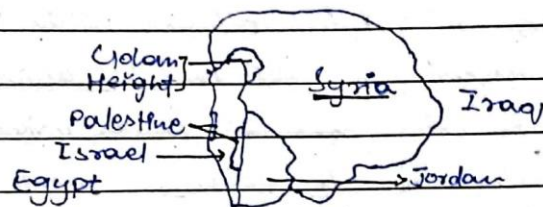
5.

4.3 PROXY WARS WILL CEASE TO EXIST:

Middle-East proxies are majorly funded by Iran and Russia. Now, the routes for supplying arms has been cut-off. This will weaken the proxies of Iran, making the dominance of Tel Aviv and Riyadh in the region. The cry of Palestinians will be buried down in their glory. As since 2023, KSA showed merely a concern over this issue except for lip service.

4.4 ISRAEL WILL DOMINATE AKA USA :

The influence of USA in the region will enhance that has been curbed during Biden administration. Israel with such support has already claimed Golan Heights of Syria. It is just the matter of time that Tel Aviv spread itself across the Nile and Riyadh to form greater Israel.



The influence of China will also be reduced and Trump in Power

5. CONCLUSION

Now, it is evident that the fall of Syria is due to many actors and decade-long struggle. The timing is crucial though. The fall of Damascus will cause multiple implications on region especially over proxy wars. The region may become less polarized, but not necessarily less hostile towards each other. For now, the rebel move of Syria is more like the calm before the storm. All the actors in the helix of affairs need to take responsibility for stability in the region.

X ——— X

QUESTION: 03

1. INTRODUCTION

The tensions between Kabul and Islamabad are going on for three years now since the arrival of Taliban government in August 2021. Pakistan welcomed them and considered them their friend in regional collaboration. The reality turned different as terrorist attacks increased at unprecedented rate with the arrival of de facto Afghan government. This not only threatens the national security of Pakistan, but also reflects its internal issue through sectorial violence. However, there are ways through which the relationship could be strengthened between both the countries for good.

2. IMPACT OF TALIBAN GOVERNMENT ON PAKISTAN

2.1 FORMING OF TERRORIST GROUPS ONCE AGAIN:

The regrouping of terrorist groups such as Tehreek-e-Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LJ) ~~are~~ is seen. This resulted in more attacks on Pakistan. Even the weak Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), separatist terrorist group, is reported to have been operating hand-in-glove with TTP.

2.2

SURGE IN ATTACKS:

Kabul allegedly provide safe heavens to TTP due to which they are planning strategically to disrupt Pakistan's progress by all means. Their attacks in Waziristan and along the tribal belt of Pakistan. As per the report of terrorism in Pakistan, ISPR tells an increase of attacks by 220 per cent.

2.3

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS DETERIORATED:

Relations with Kabul are at nadir with no hope. The reason is simple, Taliban are not ready to take action against TTP. For Afghan govt., TTP is not outlawed but more like brothers-in-arms. Also, Taliban are of the fear that TTP, if resisted, can topple their government.

2.4

SECTORIAL VIOLENCE AT RENEITH

Sectorial violence in Pakistan is seen in 2024 that was unlikely in recent years of the country. From burning bodies over sacrilege to destroying churches in Sanghoda, ~~sectorial~~ ethnic and religious intolerance walks side-by-side sectorial violence. Recent, The violence in Parachinar is its manifestation. TTP is a semi terrorist organization that is waging a war against shite Zamatayoon in Parachinar. Again, TTP is becoming a cause of violence in Pakistan.

2.5

RISE OF PROPAGANDA:

Many websites have been promoting illicit content or AI made content - deep fakes - to mislead public. PEMRA reported to ban more than 200 such websites. Youth is manipulated by these non-state actors with clever art of deception.

2.6

DIGITAL TERRORISM IN THE COUNTRY:

TIP and its factions, reportedly, hiring terrorist through these platforms as well. For instance, in 2023, Abdul Wali, a police constable in KP police, did suicide bombing killing 200 with him. Upon investigation, it was found that Wali was talking to someone from Tehreek-e-Ahrar, faction of TTP. He was manipulated for months due to which he not only shared all the information he held, but also took 200 innocent lives. This shows the inclusion of digital terrorism.

2.7

INTERNAL INSTABILITY IN PAKISTAN:

From political polarization to strengthening of separatist organizations i.e. BLA, Pakistan is facing internal instability. BLA is not only supported by TTP but also funded by India to create instability in Balochistan. Due to this the CPEC-II has been halted. This is straining Pakistan's condition security as well as economic wise.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EASING-DOWN THE TENSIONS BETWEEN KABUL AND ISLAMABAD

3.1 REGIONAL COLLABORATION:

Pakistan needs to reach fellow neighbours to have collaboration in fighting terrorism. Iran is dealing with terrorist activities besides, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and China. Australia has done similar collaboration. Also, Pakistan can use GEO-RATS to manage its border issue with Afghanistan and fight terrorism. GEO has handled 90 per cent of border issues between Central Asians.

3.2 HYBRID OPERATIONS RATHER THAN KINETIC:

Ibn-e-Khaldun said in his theory of Asabiya that the more tribal societies fight, the more they resist and fight. TTP is also a tribal based group, and history tells one that kinetic operations only slow-down the crisis. To prevent it for good, hybrid operations are the key. Dialogues would be major chunk of it with intelligence-based operation. Operation Zarb-e-Azam is right step for this reason.

3.3 CIVIL-MILITARY RELATION MUST BE FOSTERED:

Since the inception of Taliban government, civil-military relations have been severely hit. Ministry of defence must work here to bridge the gap and fulfill the deficit of trust. It will unite the

the nation. Further, ISPR must also work in promoting a good image of Pakistan around the globe. After all, India spends millions of dollars for propagandas against Pakistan. Therefore, ISPR needs to create a soft image for the defence forces.

3.4 INTELLIGENCE-BASED OPERATIONS:

Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and military Intelligence (MI) are considered best in the world. The question raises, then how BLA did strategic attack at different parts of Pakistan. Hence, ISI and MI must be checked-in to enhance their efficiency.

3.5 PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE:

The civilian leadership along with bureaucracy need to work in tandem for peaceful Pakistan. The areas that have been compromised due to terrorist operations must be rehabilitated. Education, Health and sanitation must be provided to poorly developed areas such as N. Waziristan. The military establishment, bureaucracies and civilian leadership must be on the same page for this.

3.6 PRIORITIZE NATIONAL INTEREST AND PEOPLE:

No one must set aside bigger goals of state. People must

be the beneficiaries of policies. The governance of people such as in Sweden must be heard. Their demands must be put in front of everyone to have transparency. The close-room decision must not prevail anymore. The general public must know everything that will impact their life too.

3.7 INTERNATIONAL LOBBYING :

Pakistan can use its lobbyists in countries to exert pressure on Taliban government for peace. The country can also urge UNO for its national security. For instance, India's plans of killing abroad through RAW are notorious besides its using proxies to disturb situation in Pakistan. So, this violation of sovereignty must be highlighted. After all, Pakistan is in the non-permanent UNSC countries for three years, now is the time to have international attention.

4. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Afghanistan has become a headache for Pakistan as the country is dealing with two-hostile neighbours now, India and Afghanistan. Pakistan needs to take pragmatic approach to deal with Taliban 2.0, which are different from 1990s. To put things in perspective, as per the report of transAtlantic, Afghanistan

is receiving millions of dollars from USA for notorious purpose - with the aim of disturbing China. Now, to make it easy, Pakistan holds flagship project of China's BRI, CPEC, so disturbing requires implicating Pakistan. The ambitions of Hindutva ideology at the eastern border is a cherry on the top. Pakistan must deal with Taliban with rational mindset rather than tying emotional bonds. For this to happen, Durand line must be resolved once and for all.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is clear that TTP emergence has caused multiple problems for Pakistan. The lower-spiral country is fighting unnecessary wars along with reviving its economy. Kabul must be dealt through pragmatic approach to counter the threat of TTP. From regional cooperations to international urge, Pakistan must prioritize its national interest. In this way, the countries would become brother-in-arms someday as they once used to be.

X ===== X

QUESTION : 07

Ans

1.

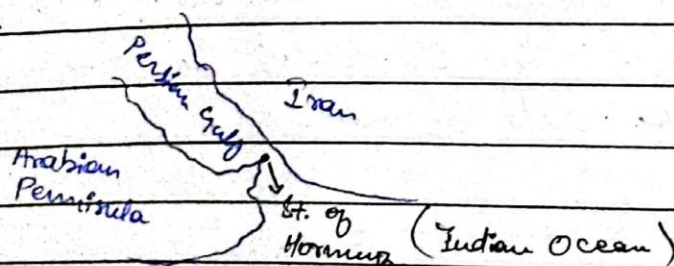
INTRODUCTION

There is a famous saying that when two elephants fight, it is only the grass that is being affected. This situation is suitable for middle-east as well. Examining the current situation there are some actors who will get benefit while other at the loss. What matters most is for how long it would take to have a peace in middle-East. The land that is sacred religiously has ironically been in war for decades. The players at the helm of affairs must commit for peace for good now.

2. PLAYERS IN MIDDLE-EAST CONFLICTS:

2.2 IRAN

Iran is a prominent player in Middle-East conflicts mainly because of its location along with the only Shia dominating country. Middle-East is influenced by Iran because 20% of world's trade passes from Persian Gulf with St. of Hormuz as the checking point.



2.2 KSA:

Saudi Arabia influence the region for two reasons. Religious sites held by it and secondly it dominates Muslim world economically - due to oil. KSA want Sunni government to all-over the Middle-East.

2.3 PROXIES:

Proxies are supported by Iran and KSA mainly - often backed by respective allies. Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthis are supported by Iran to have its influence in Gaza, Lebanon, and Yemen. Likewise, KSA supports all Sunni groups repelling the Shia proxies such as HTS in Syria supported by UAE - close ally of KSA, to displace Assad regime, which is Shia.

2.4 OTHER:

China, USA and Russia also play their respective roles to have dominance in region. USA supports Israel to have a watchdog in Middle-East. China focuses on mediation and trade, while Russia supported Assad regime in Syria.

3. BENEFICIARIES OF RECENT CONFLICT:

Recently, Israel and Hezbollah had a ceasefire deal while, ^{Damascus} ~~also~~ fall and Hamas leadership is dead. This has made multiple aspects of future but for the current situation, its beneficiaries are:

3.1 IRAN:

Iran despite losing its ally in Syria, has proved to the world that it can resist a superpower, USA, even with sanctions. Also, in Ummah Iran emerged as the only country fighting for the cause of Palestine.

3.2 USA:

USA is having advantage as Israel is holding its grounds in Middle-East. Recent ceasefire deal is done by USA between Tel Aviv and Beirut. This shows that year long fight and humiliation - it got from supporting Tel Aviv - is finally paying off. With Assad out of Damascus, things will be easy for USA.

3.3 KSA:

With Syria under Sunni rule and Iran's power at their weakest, KSA is emerging as reclaiming unchallenged position of leader of Muslim Ummah. OIC summit in Ghana also proved it.

3.4 ~~LOSERS~~ ISRAEL:

Israel has secured its borders through this conflict. With Beirut means Hezbollah in tatters and Hamas inhibited Israel is pretty much secured. Even the Golan Heights are claimed by Netanyahu officially.

Israel likely to influence its neighbours now - AFP

Lebanon

Israel
Palestine

Syria

• Assad in Moscow gave Israel peace around borders

4. LOSERS OF CONFLICT

4.1 PALESTINE

Muslim world has dug its head in the sand, while Tel Aviv killed 40 thousands mercilessly. Indeed, this conflict and now the trump in USA, have made the concept of Palestine as a state, a pipe dream.

4.2 IRAN:

Iran did attack Israel and made a name for itself as Israel used million dollars to counter the cheap Iranian missiles. Yet, Iran has lost its connection to support its proxies. As Syria fall, Hezbollah and Hamas are not in touch with Iran. So, Iran is win as well as lost in recent conflict.

4.3 CHINA:

China was influencing the region through 'good office' and mediation. But, the recent Hezbollah deal proved that USA is back in the game now. The growing influence of China among proxies of Iran would likely to diminish as well.

5.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the losers and winners of conflict are varied. For now, however, it is quite difficult to believe the situation be same. In geopolitics, tables may turn anytime. Yet, currently, the region has seen some major changes in regimes, influences and elimination of actors. Now, the precarious Middle-East seem to have tilted towards the west. Only time will tell for how long, but as of now, the situation has taken an unprecedented turn.

MIDDLE-EAST CONFLICT

BENEFICIARIES

Israel

USA

KSA

UAE

Turkey

HTS, Syria

LOSERS

China

Russia

Hamas

Hezbollah

Houthis

Palestine

Iran

QUESTION : 07

1. INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh, formerly east Pakistan, recently witnessed the change of leadership. The decade old dynastic politician, Haseena, was replaced by the coup. In return, the country is currently under temporary government of Dr. M. Yunus. Since then the country has seen a change of its international image. The fall of Haseena has resulted in opportunities and challenges for its neighbours. For Pakistan, the door of opportunity has been opened through mending ties with its lost brother.

2. THE FALL OF HASEENA'S GOVT. AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEIGHBOURS:

2.1 MYNMAR:

The Muslims of Myanmar were in extreme oppression. Till now, due to Haseena's rule and her biasness for India, relations of Bangladesh with Myanmar were not that good. The immigrants can provide cost - cheap labour too.

2.2 SRI LANKA:

Sri Lanka can increase its trade with Bangladesh. The country can

DAY _____

DATE _____

import textiles and food items through Bangladesh.

2.3 CHINA CAN EXPORT ELECTRICITY:

Since the fall of Hareema's govt., India has been building pressure on India to cut-off its electric supply - via Adani Group to Bangladesh. In this situation, China can come-up as a saviour because it has surplus of electricity.

2.4 OTHER NEIGHBOURS:

Maldives, Nepal, and Bhutan can strengthen their relations because the influence of India on Bangladesh has been diminished. Hence, these countries can have hospitable relations with Bangladesh.

3. CHALLENGES FOR THE NEIGHBOURS OF BANGLADESH AMID CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP:

3.1 INDIA'S HEGEMONY IS GONE:

Bangladesh was a close ally of India since its inception in 1971. That ally is neutral now. To put things in perspective, Bangladesh hardly supported Pakistan in trade or had good diplomatic relations, but during M. Yunus' rule the relations have improved. India has lost a major regional ally to be a regional police.

3.2 SRI LANKA AND NEPAL MAY FEEL DILEMMA

These states are dependent heavily upon India for trade and other. So, it would be a hard choice to make good relations with Bangladesh. After all, India wants all the eggs in its basket.

4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAKISTAN

4.1 TRADE OPPORTUNITIES:

Pakistan and Bangladesh hardly trade upto \$ 600m as per 2023. This number can be increased as Bangladesh is good in textile and agricultural crops while, Pakistan can provide surgical instruments, beams and IT services.

4.2 DEFENCE COOPERATION:

Pakistan and Bangladesh can achieve defence collaboration. Through this, both the countries can rely on each other in case of future-conflict. Technological transfer can make Bangladesh a viable partner of Pakistan. The threat of India will also be countered through this.

4.3 EDUCATION AND SKILLS PROGRAMS :

Bangladesh education is better than that of Pakistan's. Skills learning is mandatory in Bangladesh. Pakistan may adopt a similar model for addressing its 26m out-of-school children. Further, upskilling youth will benefit Pakistan in the form of, raise in GDP per capita.

4.4 POPULATION CONTROL :

Bangladesh has reduced its population at an unmatched rate from 3.5% to 1.3% as of now. Pakistan is facing overpopulation as well. Hence, its former eastern wing can help it, curbing population.

4.5 CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND TOURISM :

Both the countries share significant history. For example, All India Muslim League (AIML) was created in Dhaka. So, both the countries can build the good ties, sharing culture and traditions.

4.6 AGRICULTURAL AID :

Bangladesh has the most fertile land in the region, and it managed it well through adaptive technologies and hybrid seeds. Pakistan's agriculture sector is in a stagnation of growth for years.

Bangladesh can help Pakistan in making canals efficient, reclaiming lost land and manage river-beds.

4.7 BANGLADESH CAN LEAD-IN ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY:

Pakistan is at the bottom in Gender Equality Index, at 145th out of 146 states. Bangladesh has empowered its women through job quotas, equal opportunities and gender-tolerant ethics. Pakistan can seek guidance lest it hit the 146th position.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the change of regime in Bangladesh has widened its policy spectrum that was narrowed earlier to India. Due to this, many opportunities and challenges have emerged side-by-side for its neighbours. Some will surely transform the region's geopolitics. For instance the downfall of Hareema has opened doors of opportunities for Pakistan. The former east wing can aid country in socio-economic issues while, Bangladesh can seek support in defense, making it independent against India. Collectively, the overall situation of the region seem to tilt in favour of Pakistan.

X == X

